

TB Times

Shirley Fannin, M.D.

Director, Disease Control Programs

January 1998

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

Director, Tuberculosis Control Program

Volume 10 Number 1

Sue Gerber Returns from Africa

The TB Control Program is happy to have Sue Gerber return to her position as CDC Senior Public Health Advisor to the TB Program after seven months of temporary duty in Botswana, Africa. Sue will be Acting Assistant Director for Program Management until a selection is made to replace Mr. Graydon Sheperd, who left the Program late last year. Sue can be reached at 213-744-6160. Welcome back Sue!

Period for Comments on OSHA Regulations

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has extended the deadline to February 17, 1998 for comments to their proposed standards to protect workers exposed to tuberculosis. This standard would affect an estimated 5.3 million employees who work in hospitals, homeless shelters, detention facilities and other areas considered at high-risk for TB infection. The potential cost to the facilities could be quite high. For a copy of the regulation, contact the Health Education Unit at 213-744-6229.

Conferences

TB Conferences on the first Friday of the month are held in the Andrew Norman Hall of Orthopaedic Hospital, located at Adams Blvd. & Flower Street. The Physician Case Presentations on the third Friday of the month are held at the TB Control Program Office, Room 506A.

February 6, 1998

9:00-10:15a.m.

"1997 - A Year in Review:

*An Overview of Past Accomplishments
and Future Goals"*

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

Andrew Norman Hall

10:30-11:30a.m.

TB Case Presentation/Discussion
Hanh Q. Lê, M.D.

February 20, 1998

9:00-11:30a.m.

TB Case Presentation/Discussion
Hanh Q. Lê, M.D.

TB Control Classroom, #506A

ERN Quarterly Inservice

"Improving Patient Compliance"

Brenda Ashkar, R.N., M.S.N.

February 6, 1998, 10:30-11:30

Orthopaedic Hospital, Andrew Norman Hall

TB ERN Education Course

March 23-27, 1998

TB Control Program, Room 506A

ERN Quarterly Inservices for 1998

February 6, May 1, August 7 & November 6

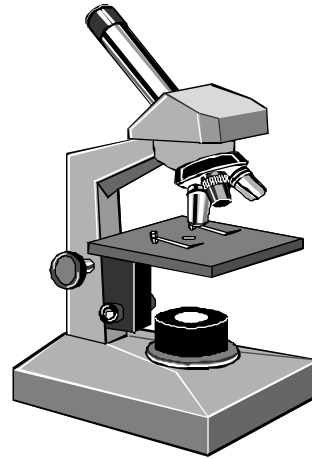
Revised Regulations for Laboratories in Effect

Effective February 2, 1996 the California Department of Health Services adopted final amendments to communicable disease reporting regulations. The new and revised requirements pertaining to clinical laboratories are found in Section 2505, Title 17 California Code of Regulations, Notification by Laboratories. Many of these provisions have been in place for several years. The following highlights these regulations as they apply to tuberculosis:

1. Laboratories are responsible for reporting all smears positive for acid-fast bacilli, cultures positive for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex, and drug susceptibility results.
2. Results must be reported to the health department serving the jurisdiction where the health care provider who first submitted the specimen is located.
3. The local health officer must be notified of a positive result within one working day from the time the laboratory notifies the health care provider who submitted the specimen.
4. Notification to the health officer must be in written form and contain patient and submitter demographic information. It must also include the date the specimen was obtained, patient identification number, specimen accession number, and findings for the laboratory test performed.
5. In all cases, the laboratory which actually makes the positive finding is obligated to report.
6. Laboratories isolating *M. tb* complex from a specimen must submit a culture from the primary isolate, as soon as it is available, to the public health laboratory serving the jurisdiction of the health care provider who originally submitted the specimen.
7. If the culture of *M. tb* complex is found to be resistant to at least INH and rifampin, an additional culture or subculture of the multidrug-resistant isolate must be submitted to the local public health laboratory.

A Laboratory Surveillance Unit has been in place at TB Control since 1994. Its function is to ensure compliance by the over 60 clinical laboratories in Los Angeles County which perform AFB testing, as well as those labs located outside of County which serve Los Angeles County clients.

Compliance with the Regulation has improved dramatically in the past few years as TB Control has worked to improve laboratory awareness of reporting requirements through surveys, visits, and telephone communication.



Through these efforts, we have established effective working relationships with many laboratories. In a 1997 match between databases of TB Control and the County's highest volume labs, we determined that these labs had reported every case of TB during the six month period surveyed. Yet, there

is still work to be done before we see 100% compliance with all portions of the Regulations. For questions regarding reporting requirements or copies of Title 17, please call Susan Ashkar at TB Control (213) 744-6160. -S.A.

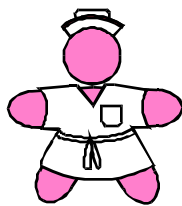
TB Control would like to congratulate Susan upon the completion of her Master's Degree in Political Science from California State University Long Beach. Good job!

Follow-up Smears and Cultures for TB Patients

TB Control has recommended that a monthly sputum specimen for AFB smear and culture be obtained on all TB cases after initiation of therapy for at least three months. Additional specimens should be collected near the time that treatment is to be discontinued in order to document that the patient was negative at the time therapy was completed. Additional specimens should be collected in any patient that remains smear positive or appears to be responding slowly to treatment until an appropriate response is documented. It is also recommended that patients with MDR tuberculosis and HIV infection with tuberculosis should have a sputum specimen collected every month during the entire course of treatment because of the greater risk of treatment failure, relapse, and drug resistance. It is expected that the clinician will obtain appropriate specimens whenever response is in doubt. -P.D.

TB Extended Role Nurse

The next Tuberculosis Extended Role Nurse Education Course is scheduled for March 23-27, 1998, in the TB Control Training Room, 506A. The course announcement and application forms were sent to CHS Nurse Managers on January 5, 1998. Applications must be received by TB Control no later than February 23, 1998. The course is designed to prepare a nurse to function as an ERN in a Tuberculosis Clinic. The Tuberculosis Extended Role Nurse (ERN) is a registered nurse who has had additional training in tuberculosis control practices and the management of patients who have tuberculosis infection or tuberculosis disease. The ERN is specifically prepared to implement and supervise Isoniazid (INH) preventive therapy. The ERN may also supervise the care of patients who have uncomplicated tuberculosis disease (Class III) which has stabilized on a medical regimen prescribed by a physician.



There are several requirements to apply for the course. They include the following:

- ▶ the applicant must be a Registered Nurse
- ▶ candidates must have one year of experience in tuberculosis
- ▶ applicants must have attended the TB Control General Inservice (one, two or three-day course) within the past five years
- ▶ all candidates must complete the course application prior to the course.

Nurse Practitioners must attend the TB ERN course in order to practice as a TB ERN. Nurse Practitioners who have not taken the course and wish to practice as a TB ERN should apply for the course.

It is expected that those who complete the course will function as ERNs in a clinic within three months of passing the course, be assigned to ERN clinics regularly, and agree to practice as an ERN for at least one year. Space for the course is limited and no more than two applications per health district will be accepted without adequate documentation of need. ***Please note: a previously certified TB ERN who has been inactive for more than two years must repeat the 5-day course before resuming practice as an ERN.*** -T.P.

Trina Pate, ERN Program Coordinator, just celebrated 25 years of service with the County of Los Angeles. She started her employment at LAC/USC Medical Center in the Orthopedic Clinic. This was followed by increasing nursing responsibilities at North Hollywood, Pacoima and Burke Health Centers. Trina has been with the TB Control Program since 1994. When asked to comment on her 25 years of service to the County of Los Angeles, she replied, "a well developed sense of humor is essential!"

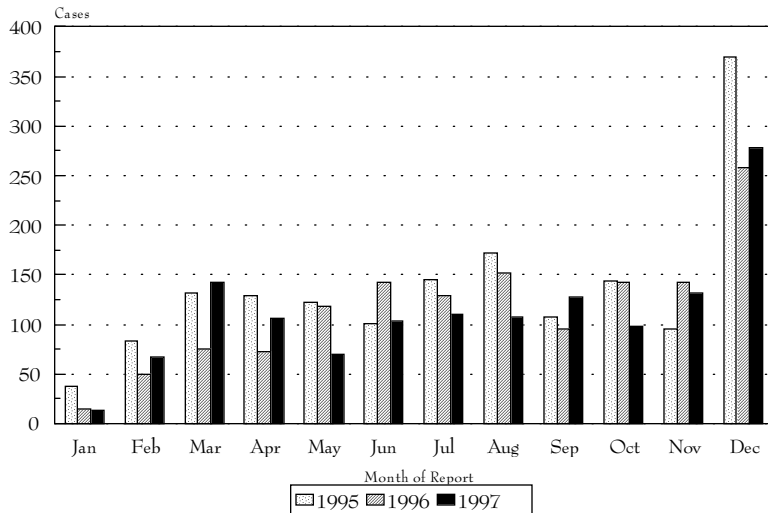
F.Y.I.

TB Control would like to welcome new employees to the Program. Trudy Yoshida, S.T.C., will be located at Men's Central Jail working with Pat Manning. She came from the Emergency Department at General Hospital. Maria Garcia, S.T.C., who previously worked in the STD Program, will be working in the Surveillance Unit. Erika Germany, I.T.C., will be working in the H-304 Registry Unit. Jaimin Kim, P.H.N., who formerly worked at Pacoima Health Center now works in the Multi-Drug Resistant Unit.

There are also a few people leaving the Program. We would like to thank Dickson Ung, C.W., for his work at Alhambra and Central Health Centers since 1981. He will start working with the Hepatitis B Perinatal Project. Angie Toyota, Contract Program Auditor, is also taking on new challenges. She will be working with Bob Frangenberg on various administrative projects.

Congratulations to Paulette Frazier, R.N., A.P.S., who just received her Master's Degree in Health Care Management from California State University Los Angeles.

Los Angeles County Tuberculosis Control
Tuberculosis Incidence
By Month of Report, 1996-1997



TB Times Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief

Paul T. Davidson, M.D.

Managing Editor

Phillip L. Moore III, M.P.A.

Editorial Staff

Wendi Drummond, M.P.H., Epidemiology Analyst

David Gambill, M.Sc., Program Manager

TB Times is a monthly publication to provide information to those interested in TB surveillance and TB Control Program activities. Please forward your articles, comments or suggestions to:

TB Times

Tuberculosis Control Program

2615 S. Grand Ave., Rm. 507

Los Angeles, CA 90007

Office: (213) 744-6160

Fax: (213) 749-0926

TB Times

County of Los Angeles

Department of Health Services

Tuberculosis Control Program

2615 S. Grand Ave., Room 507

Los Angeles, CA 90007

January Topics of Interest...

- ⇒ Sue Gerber Returns from Africa
- ⇒ OSHA Regulations
- ⇒ Laboratory Reporting
- ⇒ TB-ERN Education Course